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S E C R E T OTTAWA 003656

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SUBJECT: CANADA: RESETTLEMENT OF CERTAIN REFUGEES
(CONTINUED)

REF: (A) OTTAWA 003638 (NOTAL) (B) STATE 215194 (NOTAL)

Classified By: POLITICAL M/C BRIAN FLORA. REASON 1.4 (B) AND (D).

1. (U) This is an action message. See para 5.

2. (S) On December 13, Political Minister Counselor and polmiloff raised the matter of Uighur resettlement with Tony Burger, Assistant Secretary of the Global Affairs Secretariat at the Privy Council Office (Burger reports to Jonathan Fried, Senior Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister). Also present were a member of Burger's staff and PCO Assistant Secretary for Social Development Joan Atkinson, whose

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responsibilities include refugees. DCM subsequently discussed Uighurs with Jonathan Fried on the margins of another event.

3. (S) As none of our interlocutors was aware of USG's earlier approaches on Uighurs, including the October demarche, they could not give us a definitive response. We provided background and left prior demarche points. Atkinson confirmed that the side MOU to Safe Third would be the appropriate vehicle for USG to request resettlement of Uighurs in Canada. She and Burger requested the following additional information:

-- In light of their alleged past terrorist activities, do any of the Uighurs meet conditions for protection under the Geneva Convention? (This would be important for justification to the public)

-- Canada would like information on any "serious" negative responses from the countries USG has approached, i.e. refusals based on a substantive concern.

-- Do any of the 15 have connections to (proscribed) organizations in China?

4. (S) In his discussion with DCM, Fried did not say "no," but he did convey that taking in the Uighurs would be very difficult for the government in the current campaign climate. The impact on Canada's relationship with China was a strong consideration, he said. Another concern was that these individuals were "terrorists," albeit not directed against the U.S. and its allies. (NOTE: Atkinson had noted that unlike U.S. law, Canadian law does not "differentiate" among terrorists based on putative target. END NOTE).

5. (S) ACTION REQUEST: DCM's discussion ended with a request from Fried that security assurances regarding the Uighurs (i.e. information to support why Uighur detainees are not a threat to the U.S. and its allies) be conveyed to Canada via ROAL channels. Department's assistance in coordinating this request is appreciated.

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